

Earlier this year, Congress passed and the President signed a law [HR 241](#) (to view a copy, click on the link and enter H.R. 241 into the search field) to help encourage donations toward the tsunami relief effort. The new law allows taxpayers to treat tsunami relief donations made during **January 2005** as if the donation was made in the year 2004. This way, those taxpayers that itemize their deductions may claim this deduction on their 2004 tax returns, which most of us will file in the next few months (as opposed to waiting an entire year to claim the deduction on their 2005 tax returns.) The contributions must be made specifically for the relief of victims in areas affected by the Indian Ocean tsunami. Taxpayers do not need to fill out any additional forms; rather, it should just be indicated in the check notation that the donation is meant to be used in the tsunami relief effort.